

Northrop and Sierra "Flew the Plane Before It Was Built"

Picture an oscilloscope hooked to a computer. On the oscilloscope face is a moving target. Now take a television picture of that moving target and project it. This was the first assignment of Sierra's Video Standard Model LSV-1 camera at Northrop Corp. in Los Angeles—putting proposed aircraft designs through maneuvers and performance tests. How quickly, Northrop wanted to know, will a particular aircraft respond to moving targets under simulated flight conditions? How sturdy is the design?

Sierra's Minicon TV camera, Model M251V, was brought in almost simultaneously to watch the dials and gauges in a simulated flight cabin—comparing the readings against computer data. Light level changed constantly and the MINICON was picked because of its immediate response to these changing levels. When flight pilots first came to Northrop to begin "testing planes before they were built," they instantly saw the vast potential which the Northrop equipment held for flight training. Nothing like it had ever been available before.

Demand for the flight simulator as a training facility spread quickly as the word got around. As a result, Northrop soon found itself in the business of building and selling flight simulators to Air Force training divisions.

Under the new priorities, Sierra cameras proved to be equally valuable—monitoring flight trainees' progress and increasing skills.

Sierra Model LSV-1 New uses for Sierra cameras at Northrop are still being discovered. Because it eliminated the need for high-intensity lights, Sierra's Video Standard Model SIT-1/25—a low-light-level silicon intensified target camera—was chosen to replace a vidicon unit in the optical probe of a terrain model. Installation costs were cut sharply, and operating costs now run a fraction of what they were.

At Northrop, Sierra again demonstrated its ability and willingness to perform complex custom engineering. And again, it's paying off for everyone.



